

REMARKS

This Amendment is in response to the Official Action dated July 3, 2006.

On page 2 of that Official Action, it is stated that the Abstract should be in narrative form and generally limited to a single page on a separate sheet within the range of 50-150 words. Accordingly, a new Abstract is appended hereto which is within the range of 50-150 words. Although several paragraphs are included, it is submitted the Abstract describes the disclosure sufficiently to assist readers in deciding whether or not there is a need for consulting the full patent for details. Approval of the new Abstract is respectfully requested.

The invention is directed to hangers which are essentially for clothing although they may be used for hanging other items. Each of the embodiments discloses a hanger having a slot for receiving garments or the like. As seen in Figures 1-7, the slot 13 has a plurality of flexible holding elements, preferably fibers, for receiving the garments. These flexible elements provide minimal resistance to a garment upon being slid into the slot and the same elements prevent the garment from falling from the slot. Thus the garments are retained in and hang from the slots until they are ready to be removed which is accomplished surprisingly easily and quickly. The inventor discovered that brush-type fibers secured on one side and extending with an upward inclination across the opening of the horizontal slot provide minimal resistance to moving a garment into the receiving slot. When the garment is received in such slot, these brush-type fibers retain the garment which has been placed therein with a cam-like action until the garment is removed by simply moving the garment sideways from the slot against the minimal resistance provided by the brush fibers. The invention is easy to manufacture, requires practically no maintenance and can be depended upon to operate usefully over many years. It saves users' time

and effort in hanging and removing garments from hangers and is adapted to be used as a space saver. It is particularly advantageous for disabled people.

Claims 1-5, 7-11 and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) on the basis of U.S. Patent No. 4,557,407, to Bogaczyk, for a pants hanger in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,264,076, of Stocchiero, for a clothes hanger. It is stated in the Official Action that Bogaczyk teaches a mechanism (Figure 1) comprising a hook and a plurality of mechanisms having pairs of substantially horizontally disposed rods which define between them a slot for removably receiving an article for being hung. It is further stated that although Bogaczyk essentially teaches the invention as discussed, he fails specifically to teach resilient, flexible elements to maintain the article, yet not to impart an impression thereto which it is stated that Stocchiero teaches, reference being made in the Stocchiero patent to a mass of flexible elements 4 running crosswise to the length of the arm and protruding upwards from the surface by a small distance. It is asserted that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to utilize such elements to prevent wrinkles and yet maintain enough friction on the article.

On page 3, paragraph 4, of the Official Action, Claims 6, 12 and 16-25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) on the basis again of Bogaczyk in view of Stocchiero as applied to Claims 1-5, 7-11 and 13-15 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,021,934, to Ho, for a clothes hanger. Concerning this rejection, it is stated in the Official Action that the combination of Bogaczyk in view of Stocchiero essentially teaches the invention as disclosed above, but fails specifically to teach brush fibers, which Ho teaches. It is therefore asserted in the Official Action that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention

was made to utilize such fibers so as to ensure protection at a relatively low price. It is noted that such fibers are easily obtained and cheaply produced, ensuring low production costs.

It is respectfully submitted that the teachings of Bogaczyk, Stocchiero, Ho and the other cited references would not have made the inventor's claimed invention obvious to one skilled in the art.

Concerning the Bogaczyk patent, such devices were, it is submitted, commercially available. They held a plurality of trousers, about six or more by springy arms, parallel and close to each other. The inventor was familiar with and had used such devices or devices similar thereto. However, in the Bogaczyk device, it was cumbersome to insert trousers into the middle of a bunch pack of other trousers. Also, with these devices, the thickness of the trousers varied widely enough so that trousers composed of thin materials sometimes failed to grip, while thick ones were difficult to insert. In fact, it was experience with these prior art hangers which prompted the inventor to look for a better way. In the inventor's search, he first relied upon friction for holding the garments being hung in the hangers. From this he concluded that relying solely upon friction was not the solution. Moreover it was considered that the insertion and removal of the garments should be fingertip easy. Accordingly, the inventor conceived that the solution would be in a positive locking method whereby the more that the garments tended to move downwardly of their own weight when placed in the device, the greater would be the holding force while, at the same time, entry and exit of the garment would offer little or no resistance. This suggested to the inventor a cam of some type which is in the direction that he pursued. Please note that none of the reference patents mentions a cam action.

The inventor tried free-floating, pivoting and rotary cams of various materials as well as thin plastic leaves somewhat like those disclosed by Stocchiero. But these and other concepts,

tried off-and-on over a period of time yielded imperfect results. Moreover, these approaches are not taught by the references. Stocchiero's straight reads may be flexible, but there is no suggestion they are deflectable in reaction to an article being inserted into and from a slot for receiving the article. Incidentally, the inventor's occupation was that of a machine designer and subsequently as chief engineer of a design group for a large well known manufacturer. Although now retired, he learned that in design work, the simple, elegant result may be arrived at via circuitous route. He recalls the success in this case came one memorial evening when he tried a pivoting cam composed of a brush which he calls a "brush cam." Although some trial and error was involved, he arrived at workable proportions and specifications whereby the device allows truly effortless insertion and withdrawal. At the same time it positively gripped trousers no matter the composition of the trousers in material or thickness of cloth.

Concerning the holding elements which are defined in dependent Claim 6 as brush fibers, in independent Claim 1 it is specifically set forth that this plurality of elements that are supported by at least one of a pair of rods which define between them a slot for removably receiving an article to be hung are deflectable in reaction to the article being inserted and removed into and from the slot while imparting minimal frictional resistance to the relevant horizontal movement between the rods and the article and, at the same time, the rods bearing sufficiently against the article while in the slot frictionally to prevent the article from falling from the slot due to gravity. In Claim 14, it is set forth that the elements comprise cam-like members.

It will also be noted that the invention as defined in independent Claim 16 and 20 is not disclosed by the prior art. There is no prior art teaching to provide a slot between the parallel substantially horizontal bars whereby a plurality of fibers are inclined upwardly from one of the bars to proximate the other bar whereby items can be moved horizontally into and out of the slot

and supported by the plurality of fibers. Indeed the placement of inclined fibers in horizontal slots to receive garments is not remotely taught by the references.

As the Patent Examiner is undoubtedly well aware, virtually all inventions are combinations of old elements. Therefore an Examiner may often find every element of a claimed invention in the prior art. But if identification of each claimed element in the prior art were, as such, sufficient to negate patentability, very few patents would ever issue. Furthermore, rejecting patents by finding prior art corollaries for the claimed elements would permit the use of the claimed invention itself as a blueprint for piecing together elements in the prior art to defeat the patentability of the claimed invention. In view thereof, in the obviousness construct the suggestion to combine a requirement stands as a critical safeguard against hindsight analysis and rote application of the legal test for obviousness. Accordingly, a suggestion to combine must be found in addition to the individual elements, as such, and this requires more than a mere scintilla of evidence. With the instant Application, there is absolutely nothing in the cited prior art to suggest some motivation or teaching of the desirability of making the specific combination which was made by the instant inventor. Indeed, even when obviousness is based on a single prior art reference, there must be a showing of a suggestion or motivation to modify the teachings of that reference. Although this rule does not apply to the instant situation, it does emphasize that there must be some affirmative basis to find that the combining of a plurality of references is within the skill of the art.

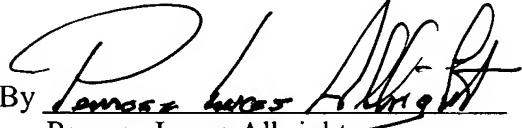
Further consideration and reexamination of this Application, in its amended form, is requested in view of 35 U.S.C. §132 and regulations in implementation thereof. It is submitted the Application in its amended form is free from ambiguity and avoids the references of record. It is further submitted the Examiner should have no difficulty in finding that the differences

between the subject matter sought to be patented in this Application and prior art and usage within the Examiner's expert knowledge are such that the subject matter as a whole would not have been obvious at the time the invention was made to persons having ordinary skill in the art to which the subject matter of this Application pertains.

In view of the foregoing, the allowance of claims as now presented is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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